

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 OPR-02 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USSS-00 FBIE-00 A-01

AID-20 SCCT-02 SY-04 IO-14 NIC-01 DRC-01 /126 W

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FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1616

S E C R E T SANTO DOMINGO 4026

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ASEC, PINT

SUBJECT: HUTCHINSON CASE

REF: SD 4010

1. PROSPECTS FOR A QUICK, SUCCESSFUL DENOUEMENT, INDICATED BY REFTEL, TOOK A DISCOURAGING TURN THIS AFTERNOON WHEN SPANISH AND VENEZUELAN COLLEAGUES AND I ACCOMPANIED POLANCO TO THE VENEZUELAN CONSULATE AREA WHERE HE PROCEEDED TO MAKE THE SCHEDULED DELIVERY. (THE ITEMS NEEDED WERE, HOWEVER, ACCEPTED--FOOD, SOFT DRINKS, MORE WATER, CIGARETTES, SOAP, CHANGE OF CLOTHES FOR MISS HUTCHISON, TOOTHBRUSH, TOOTHPASTE, BUT NO MATTRESSES WHICH CAPTORS REFUSED TO PERMIT INTO THE BUILDING).
2. PURSUANT UNDERSTANDING INDICATED PARA 2 REFTEL, MONSEÑOR POLANCO TALKED WITH SEVERAL OF THE CAPTORS. THEY DENIED, HOWEVER, THAT THEY HAD MADE STATEMENT ATTRIBUTED TO THEM AS REPORTED IN PARA ONE REFTEL. THEY STATED THAT THEY DID NOT INTEND TO SURRENDER, THAT THE FREEDOM OF PLINIO MATOS WAS NOT NEGOTIABLE, AND RELEASE BY THE GOVERNMENT OF OTHER POLITICAL PRISONERS WAS A MATTER TO BE DISCUSSED. THEY DID NOT RPT NOT MENTION RANSOM MONEY.

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3. IN RESPONSE TO MY REQUEST, GENERAL GUZMAN HAD POLICEMAN WHO REPORTED REFERENCE CONVERSATION WITH MENDEZ VARGAS BROUGHT TO HIS OFFICE TOGETHER WITH COLONEL GUERRERO WHO WAS SENIOR OFFICIAL AT THE TIME. ACCORDING GUZMAN, POLICE MAN ADAMANTLY INSISTENT THAT HE REPORTED ACCURATELY. GUZMAN CONCLUDED THAT POLICEMAN TELLING TRUTH AND THAT MENDEZ VARGAS HAD MADE STATEMENT AS MEANS OF PROVOKING GODR RESPONSE AND THEREFORE INITIATE NEGOTIATIONS.

4. COMMENT: PUTTING GUZMAN EPISODE ASIDE, POLANCO HAS CARRIED OUT FIRST STEP IN PRESIDENT'S PLAN WITH RESULT THAT CAPTORS FAILED TO MENTION RANSOM (THEY COULD OF COURSE RETURN TO THE SUBJECT LATER) AND ARE LESS INSISTENT UPON THE LIBERATION OF THE THIRTY-SIX PRISONERS HELD BY THE GODR WHO ARE ON THEIR LIST EXCEPT FOR MATOS. UNLESS SOMETHING BREAKS UNEXPECTEDLY, WE APPEAR TO BE IN FOR A FAIRLY LONG HAUL.

5. I ASKED POLANCO THIS AFTERNOON WHETHER CAPTORS HAD REPEATED THEIR INTEREST IN PLACING WOUNDED COMRADE IN AN EMBASSY. POLANCO REPLIED THAT THEY HAD AND HAD PROPOSED EITHER MEXICAN OR PERUVIAN EMBASSIES. DUBIOUS LOOKS CLOUDED THEIR FACES WHEN THE US EMBASSY WAS MENTIONED AS A POSSIBILITY. TOMORROW MORNING AFTER DELIVERING FOOD AGAIN, POLANCO WILL OFFER TO PERSUADE EITHER THE MEXICAN OR PERUVIAN AMBASSADOR TO ACCEPT THE WOUNDED MAN, BUT ONLY IN EXCHANGE FOR THE CAPTORS' FREEING ALL THREE WOMEN. IF THEY GO FOR THIS, I INTEND TO TRY TO PERSUADE BALAGUER THAT THIS IS A VERY GOOD DEAL AND WOULD NOT WEAKEN HIS NEGOTIATING POSITION SINCE THE WOUNDED MAN CASE IS UNIQUE (HOPEFULLY).

HURWITCH

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